

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7434

INFO AMCONSUL MONTREAL

AMCONSUL QUEBEC

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PASS DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION, DEPT OF AGRICULTURE,
INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION, CIVIL AERONAUTICS
BOARD AND MARITIME ADMINISTRATION (COMMERCE)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, EWWT, ELTN, EGEN, PINT, CA

SUBJ: TRANSPORT ASPECTS OF QUEBEC'S PROPOSED LABELLING
AND ADVERTISING REGULATIONS

REF: MONTREAL A-111, AUG 29; MONTREAL 1415, QUEBEC 180
OTTAWA 2388, STATE 141901

1. THE ATTENTION OF WASHINGTON TRANSPORT AGENCIES IS
CALLED TO SECTION 6 (PAGE 4709) OF PROPOSED QUEBEC
LABELLING REGULATIONS (TRANSMITTED AS ENCLOSURE TO REFAIR)
TO IMPLEMENT THE 1974 OFFICIAL LANGUAGE ACT. THIS SECTION
READS AS FOLLOWS:

"PUBLIC SIGNS OR ADVERTISEMENTS INSTALLED ON VEHICLES,
AIRCRAFT, TRAINS OR SHIPS MUST BE DRAWN UP IN FRENCH OR
BOTH IN FRENCH AND ONE OR SEVERAL OTHER LANGUAGES IF,
IN THE CASE OF VEHICLES, THESE ARE REGISTERED IN QUEBEC
OR IF, IN THE CASE OF AIRCRAFT, TRAINS OR SHIPS, SUCH
ARE USED PRINCIPALLY FOR PASSENGERS OR
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MERCHANDISE TRANSPORTATION WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF

QUEBEC.

"NOTWITHSTANDING THE FIRST PARAGRAPH, PUBLIC SIGNS OR ADVERTISEMENTS INSTALLED ON A VEHICLES REGISTERED BOTH IN QUEBEC AND OUTSIDE QUEBEC BUT WHICH HAS ITS HOME BASE AND MAINLY TRAVELS OUTSIDE QUEBEC MAY BE DRAWN UP IN ONE OR SEVERAL LANGUAGES, OTHER THAN FRENCH, WITH THE EXCEPTION, HOWEVER, OF MESSAGES INTENDED TO ENSURE THE PROTECTION OR SAFETY OF PERSONS OR GOODS, WHICH MUST BE DRAWN UP IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RULE SET FORTH IN THE FIRST PARAGRAPH OF SECTION 1."

2. THE EXCEPTION IN THE LAST CLAUSE OF THE SECOND PARAGRAPH APPEARS TO HAVE IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. AIRLINES, RAILROADS, TRUCKERS, MOTOR BUS OPERATORS, CONTAINER OPERATORS, AND POSSIBLY SHIPPING COMPANIES OPERATING BETWEEN U.S. POINTS AND POINTS IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC EVEN ON A CASUAL BASIS. AS A MINIMUM IT APPEARS TO SUGGETS THAT SUCH SIGNS AS "FASTEN SEAT BELTS", "NO SMOKING", "EXIT", "WATCH YOUR STEP", "PASS ON THE LEFT", ETC., MAY HAVE TO BE PROVIDED IN FRENCH IN ADDITION TO ANY OTHER LANGUAGE EMPLOYED. CONCEIVABLY, THIS REQUIREMENT COULD EXTEND TO VERBAL IDENTIFICATION OF DASHBOARD AND COKPIT CONTROLS. HOWEVER, THE POSSIBILITY IS LEFT OPEN IN SECTION 9 FOR USE OF SYMBOLS RATHER THAN WORDS FOR CONVEYING MESSAGE.

3. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT THIS PROPOSED REQUIREMENT BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF US CARRIERS IN ALL MODES OF TRANSPORT -- INCLUDING AMTRAK AND NON-REGULATED TRUCKERS CARRYING EXEMPT AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES -- DOING EVEN OCCASIONAL BUSINESS IN QUEBEC. IT IS NOT CLEAR YET HOW SUCH REQUIREMENTS WOULD BE ENFORCED BUT IF ADOPTED THEY HAVE THE POTENTIALITY FOR HARASSMENT AND DISRUPTION OF TRANSPORT MOVEMENTS AS WELL AS LEAVING VIOLATORS LIABLE TO FINES.

4. THE QUEBEC GOVERNMENT HAS INVITED COMMENTS WITHIN NINETY DAYS ON ITS PROPOSED REGULATIONS AND WILL ALSO UNCLASSIFIED

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PROVIDE CLARIFICATIONS (ADDRESSES GIVEN IN REPAIR)). THE MULTIPLICITY OF US FIRMS CONCERNED SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS DIRECTLY TO THE QUEBEC AUTHORITIES BEFORE NOVEMBER 15. IF THE USG ITSELF WISHES TO COMMENT THE EMBASSY WILL DO SO AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL UPON INSTRUCTION FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT. JOHNSON

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